



AN OUTLINE

OR

LOCKE'S

ESSAY CONCERNING HUMAN UNDERSTANDING

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## PREFACE.

The publication of Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding marks an era in the history of philosophy. Subsequent writers have either developed the theories contained in it, or made an attempt of their refutation. On Berkeley and Hume, the immediate successors of Locke in philosophical speculations, his influence was most remarkable. It may well be questioned whether Berkeley would have written the Principles and the Dialogues if Locke had not written the Essay ; and there can be no doubt that Hume's Treatise and Enquiry were nothing but a consistent carrying out of the negative sides of his predecessors. An acquaintance with the Lockian system is, therefore, absolutely necessary for the better understanding of these authors, whose works are often prescribed as text-books for the Degree examinations by the Indian Universities. In the following pages an attempt has been made to give a clear and concise exposition of the most salient points of the Essay, together with a brief estimate of their

merits and defects. I have here to acknowledge most thankfully my great indebtedness to the excellent monograph on Locke contributed to the Philosophical classics series by Dr. A. C. Fraser, the emeritus Professor of Logic and Metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh, and also to Professors Lewis and Fowler and other scholars and critics of Locke, whose works I have consulted in this connection with great profit. My best thanks are also due to the Rev. G. Macalister, M. A., who kindly looked over this pamphlet before its publication and made some valuable suggestions to me.

JEYPORE :

SANJIBAN GANGULI.

*The 28th February, 1896.*

I have read this Essay on Locke with both pleasure and profit. In the suggestions I have made I have confined myself entirely to verbal criticism, the subject matter I have not touched \*\*\*. It is a wonder to me how a foreigner has been able to use my native English so well in the expression of abstruse ideas.

JEYPORE :

G. MACALISTER.

*The 22nd June, 1896.*

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# L O C K E .

## BOOK I. INNATE IDEAS.

Design of the Essay.—The design of the Essay, as set forth by Locke in the beginning of it, is "to enquire into the origin, certainty, and extent of human knowledge, together with the grounds and degrees of belief, opinion and assent." He expressly excludes from his inquiry both biological and ontological hypotheses. On the one hand, "the physical considerations of mind," such as Hobbes had pursued, or as has been subsequently developed in the psycho-physiological and evolutionary schools of Hartley, Darwin and Spencer, were entirely unknown to Locke, who like Descartes made consciousness the starting point of his philosophy. In this connection, Dugald Stewart has well remarked that in the Essay there is not a single passage savouring of the anatomical theory or of the chemical laboratory. On the other hand, the transcendental criticism of experience, knowledge and the universe, which finds an immanent invisible

reason as the ultimate goal of philosophy, was equally foreign to Locke.

Destructive and Constructive sides of the Essay.—Locke's Essay may be viewed on its two sides. Firstly, the negative or destructive side of his philosophy is contained in his attack against the doctrine of innate ideas, proving that there cannot be any such ideas "engraven on the mind of man from his birth" prior to conscious experience; and secondly, the positive or constructive side of the Essay is his doctrine that all our knowledge is the product of experience.

Locke's disproof of innate ideas.—The existence of certain universal principles, speculative as well as practical, is adduced in proof of Innate Principles as implanted in the human mind from its very origin. Such are the principles of identity, whatever is, is; of contradiction, it is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be; and the moral principle of right and wrong. Locke's disproof of these so-called innate principles divides itself into three parts.

1. Disproof of the universal speculative principles.—(a) The speculative principles of Identity and Contradiction are unknown to children and

uncultivated persons ; hence they cannot be innate, for there can be no idea without consciousness. (b) Then again, these principles, as universal propositions, are grasped by the mind long after it grasps concrete or particular examples. The fact is that the mere capacity for knowledge is innate, but that actual knowledge is acquired. If the innateness of our capacity guarantee the innateness of our knowledge, then all our knowledge without exception, and not some of it, must be innate—a doctrine which has never been seriously advocated by any philosopher.

## 2. *Disproof of universal practical principles.*

(a) Moral principles cannot be innate ; for (a) they require to be proved and are referred by different philosophers to different standards, such as happiness, perfection, the will of God, &c. (b) The practical principles of different nations are often different and even contradictory. There are savages in the world who commit the most atrocious crimes under the notion of practising *their best virtues*. The fact is that only desire of happiness and aversion to pain are innate, but moral ideas and principles are acquired. Moreover, principles cannot be innate because they

contain abstract ideas such as identity, difference, right, wrong, &c., which, far from being innate, are acquired after considerable reflection.

3. *Disproof of innate theological principles:*—

The idea of God cannot be innate, because (*a*) some savages do not possess the idea, and (*b*) different ideas of God are held by polytheists and monotheists. God's existence is rationally inferred from marks of wisdom and power in the universe.

Criticism of Locke's refutation of innate ideas:—In his polemic against Innate Ideas, Locke wholly misunderstood the doctrine he was attacking. No philosopher, before or after him, ever held it in the sense as formulated by him. By Innate Ideas and Innate Principles he understands that these ideas and principles are implanted in the human mind from its very origin ; that they are like so many “characters stamped upon the soul of a man, which it receives in its first being and brings into the world with it” ; and that, therefore, they should always be consciously realized by every man. It thus became an easy task for him to show that even the self-evident and demonstrable truths are not innate, for they

are not consciously realized by infants, savages or idiots. His remarks, however, fall wide of the mark, as the new interpretation put upon Innate Ideas was entirely his own creation. Descartes, his distinguished predecessor and the father of the modern philosophy, did not certainly hold it in this form. He had, indeed, said that some of our ideas are innate. But by Innate Idea he meant merely "a mental modification which existing in the mind antecedently to all experience, possesses, however, only a *potential* existence until on occasion of experience it is called forth into *actual* consciousness. The chief ground on which Descartes holds that certain judgments are prior to experience and native to the mind, is the impossibility of deriving them as *universal* from individual corporeal movements, which, if efficient, could give rise to modifications merely *individual*."<sup>\*</sup> In his reply to Reginis, Descartes says that ideas are called innate in the same sense in which we say that generosity is innate in certain families, in others, certain diseases, as gout or gravel, not that, therefore the infants of these families labour under

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\* Veitch's edition of Descartes note VI.

those diseases in the womb of the mother, but because they are born with a certain disposition or faculty of contracting them. Here Descartes was, infact, very near the modern scientific explanation of innate ideas propounded by the Evolutionary School, which applies the term to "the inherited tendencies and dispositions to think, feel or act in particular ways." Such tendencies are the outcome of the experience of the race ; and in this sense, Spencer would allow that moral and intellectual principles, which are the result of a long course of evolution in the race, are intuitive to the individual.

However mistaken in its scope Locke's attack against Innate Ideas might have been, it has undoubtedly done a great service to the cause of truth by banishing many so-called axiomatic propositions from the province of philosophy, and subjecting all of them to be examined by the light of our reason. When rightly interpreted, his remarks amount to a protest against a spirit which was handed down from the scholastic age of philosophy—the spirit of assuming principles and propositions on mere

authority, independent of rational criticism. Locke admits that there are self-evident and demonstrative truths, but he insists that instead of accepting them on trust, we must have a previous personal rational perception of their self-evidence and demonstration. By giving the epithet Innate to some of our ideas, which our prejudice and ignorance incline us to assume, we vainly seek to cover our own weakness; and create a presumption in favour of our principles that they are axiomatic and above suspicion. But the mere use of a term can never justify our errors. It simply makes us blindly assume propositions without examination of their truth and validity. The first book of the *Essay* is, therefore, infact “a revolt against the despotism of dogmas” which disdain to be verified by facts of experience, and an assertion of the rights of understanding to examine the grounds of our thoughts and ideas.\* “It is a philosophical protest of rational insight against the blind dependence on authority.”†

\* Fraser's *Locke* (Philosophical classics series).

† Article *Locke* in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

## BOOK II.

### POSITIVE OR CONSTRUCTIVE.

#### ORIGIN OF KNOWLEDGE AND ANALYSIS AND CLASSIFICATION OF IDEAS.

Knowledge presupposes ideas :—As there can be no knowledge without ideas and states of consciousness, an investigation about knowledge and its extent presupposes previous investigations about ideas and thoughts. Before entering, therefore, into the inquiry about knowledge, which Locke deals with in the fourth book of his essay, he first gives us a logical analysis of our ideas and thoughts—the simpler elements of our knowledge.

Idea, its meanings :—(1) Locke uses the word idea in a very wide sense, applying it to every thing which falls within our consciousness. "It stands for whatever is the object of the understanding, when a man thinks ; it is used to express whatever is meant by phantasm, notion, species, or whatever it is which the mind can be employed about in thinking."\* Locke's "idea" is thus synonymous with "notions," "thoughts," "mental modifications," or "modes of conscious-

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\*Locke's Essay, Bk. I, Chap. I, Introduction.

ness;" and his philosophy will be more consistently interpreted, if we adhere to this meaning throughout. But his expressions, are sometimes loose and unguarded; and he often seems to use the term in the sense of mental representation or image. This has created a confusion and inconsistency in his philosophy. Reid's arguments against the Lockian doctrine are mainly based upon the meaning of "idea" as "image;" but the force of his destructive criticism will be greatly diminished if we substitute "knowledge of" in places where Locke uses "the idea of."

Experience, the origin of knowledge: Sensation and Reflection :—Rejecting all innate hypotheses, Locke supposes that the human mind has at first no ideas in it. He compares it to a tabula rasa, void of all characters. Ideas are afterwards inscribed on it by the hand of experience, which Locke recognises as the only and universal source of human knowledge. There are two fountains of experience, Sensation and Reflection. By Sensation is meant the perception of the simple operations of the external objects through the special senses; and by Reflection, also termed the internal sense, the perception of

the internal operations of the soul in thinking, believing, willing and so forth. In the reception of our sensations, the mind is wholly passive. External objects furnish the mind with the ideas of sensible qualities; and the mind furnishes the understanding with the ideas of its own operations.

*Is Locke a sensationalist?*—The question has often been raised whether Locke is a sensationalist, as his French followers Condilac and Diderot assert him to be; or whether he has any thing common with the intellectualists, who find in the mind itself an original source of our knowledge supplying it with its native and necessary elements. The question has not, however, been, nor can be, clearly decided. For Locke expresses himself on this point in such a loose manner that his language can be strained in any way. The mention of reflection as an original source of ideas, distinct from sensation, led Mr. Stewart and others to vindicate Locke's so-called "intellectualism." They thought that Locke would mean "that the understanding is itself a source of new ideas; that all the simple ideas which are necessarily implied in our intellectual operations

of memory, imagination, reasoning, &c., are ultimately to be referred to Reflection." Locke, according to this class of his critics, is to be distinguished from the sensationalist schools of philosophers. For he recognises two distinct sources of knowledge, while the sensationalists found the ultimate source of it only in the impressions of sense. "Our ideas" says Condilac, "are nothing more than transformed sensations." Moreover, the French sensationalists derive from sensations not only all our knowledge but *all our faculties*. But in Locke's Essay there is not the least idea of evolving the faculties out of sensations. Nor did he, like the pure sensationalists, conceive that the mind itself was developed out of the senses.

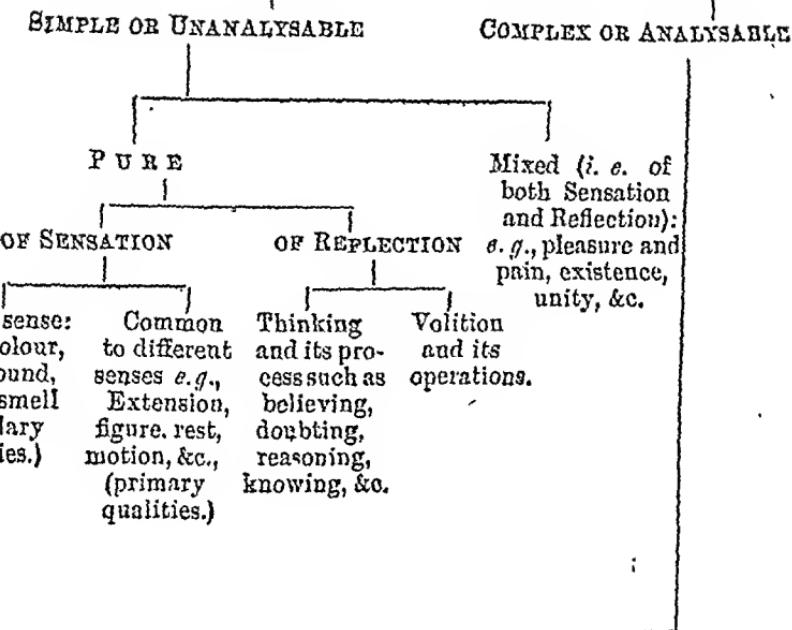
But according to another class of his critics, such as Hamilton, Knight, &c., Locke is a pure sensationalist and Condilac's interpretation of his doctrines is the only consistent and correct one. In the reception of first ideas Locke considers the mind as wholly passive. He believes it to be originally a *tabula rasa*, and the first impressions must be conveyed to it by the channels of sensation. The mind may thereafter ponder

over the materials supplied by sensation, and consider the operations of the mind in perceiving external objects. It can thus form a new class of ideas called the ideas of reflection. But this reflection cannot be said to be an independent source of knowledge. The origin of the ideas of reflection must be wholly sought in sensation itself. Locke distinctly says "there appears not to be any ideas in the mind before the senses have conveyed any in." Moreover Locke's reflection does not pretend to explain the intuitive elements or rational implicates of knowledge; "It is conversant," says Sir W. Hamilton, "only with the contingent." No interpretation of Locke can ever find in his reflection a revelation of aught native or necessary to the mind.

Classification of ideas.—Ideas are broadly divided into simple and complex. Simple ideas are those unanalysable phenomena that enter into the mind by Sensation and Reflection. These are the materials of all our knowledge. The mind is wholly passive in their reception, and can neither make nor unmake any of them. But this does not mean that the mind must first receive the simple ideas in all their simplicity; for these

Ideas are found to exist united together, and different senses, such as sight and touch, often take in from the same object different ideas at the same time. Simple ideas of Sensation are of two sorts, (1) those formed by one sense, as colours by sight, sound by hearing, solidity or impenetrability by touch; and (2) those formed by more senses than one, such as extension, figure, motion and rest by both sight and touch. Simple ideas of Reflection are those of perception or thinking and volition or willing. There are some mixed simple ideas that enter into the mind by both Sensation and Reflection, such as pleasure, pain, unity, existence, &c. Complex ideas are those that are compounded of the simple ones. The mind can make them in infinite variety by combining the simple ideas, or comparing any two ideas, whether simple or complex, or abstracting some of the ideas from those that always accompany them in their real existence. Complex ideas may be reduced under three heads: Modes, Substances, and Relations. The following gives a tabular view of the classification of ideas ;—

## IDEAS



Modes: *i. e.*, complex ideas which cannot subsist by themselves, but be conceived "as dependencies on, or affections of substances; *e. g.*, modes of number, space, duration, motion, colour, taste, &c.

Substances conceived as substratum or support to aggregates of sensible qualities.

Relations, *i. e.*, ideas arising from comparing of ideas with one another, *e. g.*, identity, difference, co-existence, succession and cause and effect.

**Distinction between Primary and Secondary Qualities:**—*Primary Qualities* (*spatial bulk, figure, motion, &c.*).—Ideas of primary qualities are copies of them as they exist in objects. *Secondary qualities* (colour, sound, taste, smell, &c.) are mere

sensations. Our ideas of secondary qualities do not resemble their sources which are the modifications of bulk, figure, motion, &c. (the primary qualities of objects). The primary qualities lie in things, the secondary qualities lie in ourselves.

Complex ideas.—The question of mental development or genesis is not raised by Locke. It is wrong to attribute to him, as Cousin does, the doctrine that the mind proceeds from the simple and the individual to the complex and the general. Infact, Locke simply finds that our ideas are some of them analyzable and complex, and others unanalyzable or simple; but he does not mean that our complex ideas are chronologically posterior to simple ideas.. Locke, however, held that the child's experiences are individual and concrete, whether they be simple or complex, and that general and abstract ideas are subsequently acquired through abstraction and the logical processes of the Understanding.

Locke's main thesis in the Second Book is that all our ideas have their origin in concrete phenomenal experience, whether external or internal ; and in corroboration of his view he

brings forward certain complex ideas, such as the ideas of infinity, substance, causality, &c., which are usually considered as innate, but which he seeks to establish or ground on experience. These may be called crucial or test instances.

Idea of Infinity as applied to space and time:— Though infinite space is invisible and infinite duration cannot be realized in our finite consciousness, still we are somehow obliged to lose our positive idea of finite space in the negative idea of immensity, and our positive idea of finite duration in the negative idea of eternity. Why we are thus obliged to add to this perception of external and internal sense, Locke does not explain or discuss at all. He calls these metaphysical ideas obscure, indeterminate, negative, and accounts for them psychologically by supposing that the mind goes on removing the idea of limit from the concrete spaces and time of our experience.

Substance:—Here also Locke speaks of the idea as obscure, and thinks it is made up of some thing plus support to qualities. Whether it be because we are accustomed to find many qualities

together, or whether there is some other cause at work, we are compelled to supply a support for the aggregation of a number of qualities. Although neither external nor internal experience gives us this conception of substance, and although we have no distinct idea of it, still we think that it exists, and is the support of the qualities. It is, infact, the idea of an uncertain supposition, we know not what, underlying phenomena, but incapable of being itself phenomenalized. In Locke's view God, if He had so willed, might have endowed material substance with the power of thinking. He, however, recognises the distinction between material and spiritual substances.

Personal Identity :—Locke's treatment of personal Identity is somewhat vague and incoherent. He accepted it as a fact but was quite puzzled as to its explanation owing to the breaks and intervals of our conscious life. He however resolves it after all into the continuity of our consciousness by the aid of memory. A man has the consciousness of a certain mental state, wherewith is connected the remembrance of a certain anterior state, which was also connected with an anterior state and so on. In this

way, he is connected with his boyhood by a regular series of transmitted acts of consciousness. "As far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of that person." According to Locke, this consciousness alone constitutes personal identity, irrespective of the spiritual substance underlying it. He distinctly says that the question of personal identity has no concern with the identity or sameness of spiritual substance. It consisting solely in consciousness, as long as the same consciousness is preserved, so long will there be the sameness of person, no matter whether the spiritual substance be the same or not. "If the same consciousness," he says, "can be transferred from one thinking substance to another it will be possible that two thinking substances make but one person."\* This view of personal identity is far from being a satisfactory one. It is but an easy step from it to Hume's doctrine that the mind itself is a bundle of ideas and impressions, and that personal identity is an illusion engendered by "the smooth and uninterrupted progress of thought." It has, there-

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\*Locke's Essay, Bk. II, Chap. 27.

fore, been gravely objected to by many eminent philosophers, as it plainly contradicts one of the simplest facts of our consciousness. Personal identity is presupposed in consciousness, just as truth is presupposed in knowledge. Consciousness does not create it, but simply discovers it as already realized in its very act.

Power and Causality.--In the 26th Chapter of the Second Book Locke accounts for cause. We constantly observe that qualities and finite substances begin to exist, and receive their existence from other beings, which produce them or have the power to bring on them changes. Seeing, for instance, that "in the substance, we call wax, fluidity is constantly produced by the application of a certain degree of heat, we *somewhat* come to think of heat as the cause and fluidity as the effect." Locke nowhere explains this *somewhat*, the rational necessity of the principle of causality in the interpretation of the facts of this universe. He simply ascribes the origin of our idea of causation to an experience of sensible changes which one body produces on another, as fire upon wax; but he does not explain how these sensible changes are produced, and why

we are forced to think of the causal *nexus* as universal and necessary. Any thing, so far as constant observation tells us, might have been the cause of any thing; no finite number of instances of observed sequence can guarantee its universality. The idea of cause depends upon that of power which Locke tries, but fails, to account for in the 21st Chapter. Locke's definition of a cause is evidently question-begging. The power to produce is the point requiring explanation as it is not the object of perception: but Locke mainly assumes it. Our idea of power is, however, vaguely referred by him to reflection, since we get it through consciousness of our voluntary agency: but this thought is not developed in his *Essay*.

**Freedom of Will:**—Locke's position with regard to Freedom of Will is obscure and vacillating. While he traces power and causality to reflection and our consciousness of free agency, and while he also acknowledges personal responsibility as grounded upon the freedom, he at the same time held that our volitions are themselves subject to the law of causality; in other words, our motives are rigidly determined by causes

inherent in ourselves and our surroundings. The fact is, we are free agents because we act according to our own motives, and because there is no external compulsion or constraint. He defines liberty as "the power a man has to do or forbear doing according to the determinations of the Will." A man is, therefore, free, if his actions follow his mental motives; he is not free, when anything external to him forbids the action so moved. In this sense alone Locke vindicated freedom. But so far as the motives are concerned, he was a determinist.\* He also hints, but very obscurely, that all changes in the universe are referred by inexplicable instinct in us to a power,

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\*The deterministic position of Locke is thus illustrated by Voltaire :—  
"It is proposed to you to ride on horseback, it is absolutely necessary for you to make a choice, for it is very clear that you must either go or not; there is no medium, you must absolutely do the one or the other. So far it is demonstrated that the Will is not free. You will get on horseback? why? Because I will do so an ignorant will say: This reply is an absurdity, nothing can be done without reason or cause. Your Will then is caused by what? The agreeable idea which is presented to your brain; the predominant and determined idea; but, you will say, cannot I resist an idea which predominates over me. No, for what would be the cause of your resistance? An idea by which your Will is swayed still more despotically. You receive your ideas, and then, receive your Will. You Will then necessarily; consequently the word liberty belongs not to the Will in any sense.

like the creative power of which we are conscious in ourselves.

Moral Relations:—In morality, Locke belongs to the Utilitarian School, and, like all its advocates, he contends that we have neither any innate moral principle, nor a distinct innate moral faculty that recognises right and wrong independent of pleasure or pain. The rules of morality differ in men according to circumstances; and the same action, which is considered as moral in one country, is set aside as immoral in another. Our moral sentiments are the product of education, custom and the association of ideas. Good or evil are ultimately resolvable into pleasure or pain or that which occasions pleasure or pain. These are attached, as consequences, in the shape of reward or punishment, to certain courses of action by one of three laws—the Divine Law, the State Law, and the Law of Public Opinion. Moral good or evil is thus only the conformity or disagreement of our voluntary actions to one or other of the laws of good or evil decreed either by the Divine Legislator, or the Civil Legislator or the Public Opinion. Locke admits that though the Law of Public Opinion influences the conduct

of men far more than any other law, yet the Divine Law or the Will of God, when it can be known, is the highest standard of morality and the measure of sin and duty. The sanctions of morality, when it based on the theological grounds are the rewards and punishment of a future state, which we are assured of only by revelation.

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imply one or other of the four kinds of relations: (1) identity or difference (*e. g.*, blue cannot be yellow), or (2) necessary relation either immediate or mediate (*e. g.*, two and three equal to five or two triangles on equal bases and between the same parallels are equal to one another, or (3) co-existence or succession (*e. g.*, heat expands body,) or (4) correspondence to the idea of reality.

Degree of certainty or probability appertaining to the different kinds of judgment or relation:—  
 (a) The first and the second kinds of relation may give us certainties about universal truths as well as particular facts. (b) Universal and necessary truths concerning mathematical and moral abstractions can be reached only through the second kind. (c) Certainties about individuals, *i. e.*, about real existence can only be reached through the fourth kind. (d) The practically all important judgments about co-existence and succession of phenomena can be only subjective presumptions of probability.

✓ Three ontological certainties.—(1) *The Ego or self*:—Each man has an intuitively certain knowledge of his individual existence as a conscious

being. Locke's argument follows that of Descartes' *cogito ergo sum*. This knowledge is, however, not innate.

2. *God as the one Infinite mind*.—This is an absolute certainty. It is not however innate. Neither is it self-evident like our knowledge of our own existence. It is a demonstrable truth. Our own self-conscious existence is the starting point from which, through the application of the principle of causality, we reach the existence of one supreme mind. Locke here tacitly assumes the universality of causation, though his analysis of it in the Second Book can hardly account for it. The real existence of God is the one necessity in concrete individual existence. My own individual existence though real is not thus universally and absolutely necessary.

3. *The universe, external world, matter, &c:*—Though the real existence of all external things (except that of God) may be doubted, still, Locke maintains, our actual perceptions of external things presented to us involve an assurance that deserve the name of knowledge and certainty. But whenever we pass from present to remem-



## GENERAL REMARKS.

Locke's position: his method and style.—Locke occupies a very high position in the history of philosophy. He is the unquestioned founder of the empirical school of modern psychology—nay the father of psychology itself. Hobbes and Gassendi, Descartes and Spinoza had, indeed, treated some of the questions of mental science; but they had all regarded it as subordinate to other sciences, and had taken only a very cursory view of it in illustration of their favourite studies. Hobbes had given it as an introduction to his political philosophy, Gassendi to his physics, and Descartes and Spinoza to their metaphysics explaining the nature and attributes of God. Locke was the first to make psychology an independent branch of inquiry. By his patient observation, his strong common sense and his earnest love of truth, he for the first time gave us a most complete chart of the human mind, and secured for this much neglected science an eminent place in the common wealth of learning. The analytic method, which was inaugurated by Bacon, and applied by Newton with brilliant success in the

investigation of the physical sciences, was also for the first time extended by Locke to the sphere of psychology. Instead of starting with preconcieved ideas and dogmas, as many *a'priori* philosophers before him had done, he set himself to examine in "historical plain matter-of-fact fashion" the operations of his own mind, and resolved them into simpler and original elements of experience out of which they had been formed. It has justly been remarked by Prof. Fowler that "Locke's was preeminently the philosophy of experience both in its method and in its results. It accepts nothing on authority, no foregone conclusion, no data from other sciences." He was a great original thinker and his speculations bear the strongest marks of having been wrought out of the materials of his own mind. His peculiar "masculine racy" style was a proper vehicle for conveying his new thoughts to the world, its chief merits being simplicity, directness and clearness of expression. Locke had a genuine abhorence of obscurity and vagueness of language, which was often mistaken for depth and profundity of thought. So he studiously avoids the old technicalities of the

school that had served as a cloak for charlatans, and uses in his *Essay*, as far as possible in a philosophical work, such plain, simple, and idiomatic English that well bred people could use it, with slight changes, in conversation. He varies his expressions in different ways to make his readers the better understand his meaning. But this, over and above the fault of redundancy, was a source of confusion in his writing. Some of the passages in his *Essay*, when taken by themselves, seem to contradict each other. But Locke should not be judged by such isolated extracts, unless they are fully borne out by a reference to the whole content, and by the spirit and tenor of his speculation.

Criticism on Locke's Origin of knowledge.—Locke's *Essay* is not altogether free from defects. He has derived all human knowledge from individual experience. But, as Mr. Fowler points out, in order to receive and acquire experience it is essential that the mind should be endowed with certain inherent faculties. Whence come these faculties? Locke gives no explanation of them. To complete his psychology he should have opened an enquiry into the origin of our faculties.

The question was, perhaps too abstruse for him to discuss. But the insufficient explanation of the beginning of conscious experience has led Leibnitz to meet the empirical adage “nihil est in intellectu quod non prius fuerit, in sensu” (nothing is in the intellect which has not been in the senses before) by his celebrated retort “nisi intellectus ipse” (except the intellect itself). Again, in his attempt to give undue prominence to the passive side of human knowledge, Locke has ignored the activity of the mind, without which our knowledge would not have been more than an incoherent and confused mass of impressions. Locke, of course, recognises its activity in forming the complex ideas and also the simple ideas of reflection. But he denies it altogether as an agency in the formation of the simple ideas of sensation. Here he overlooks the obvious fact that but for some sort of attention, or certain reaction of the mind from within, these ideas could not have been formed. Lastly, though Locke has furnished us with an elaborate analysis of ideas as he found them in adult minds, he has given no account of the early stage of an infant mind when it receives the elementary

notions of space, time, causality, &c., nor does he give any satisfactory solution of the origin of these notions.)

Elements of Idealism and Scepticism in Locke: His influence on Berkeley and Hume.—Though Locke himself was neither an idealist nor a sceptic, his experiential principles were afterwards developed into those of idealism and scepticism. (As knowledge presupposes ideas; and as ideas must always be in our mind, so our knowledge cannot but be subjective.) This is a logical deduction from Locke's philosophy, and indeed in several places of his Essay he himself lays stress upon it. But he often goes only half-way towards the conception of knowledge as purely subjective. His distinction between the primary and secondary qualities, *viz.*, that the ideas of the former are exact copies of what really exist in bodies, and those of the latter are mere sensations in our minds without the least resemblance to any thing in the body,—is inconsistent with the fundamental principles of his empirical philosophy. For the primary qualities as well as the secondary are only ideas in our minds, and are therefore equally subjective. Berkeley did away

with this distinction and resolved them equally into impressions in our minds. Again, Locke's treatment of matter as the unknown support of accidents paved the way for the immaterialism of Berkeley and the agnosticism of Hume. If substance be something, we know not what, inconceivable by us, what right have we to assume its existence? What guarantee is there that it is not a mere fiction of the imagination? The next step in philosophy was naturally, therefore, to get rid of this suppositional something. This was partly done by Berkeley's denial of the independent existence of matter. He resolved the material world into sense-dependent phenomena, presented to the human mind in a regular order by the ever active Divine Reason. His idealistic conception of the world was meant to extol the importance of *Mind* by showing that the ideas and spirits comprehend all sorts of existences. For the unintelligible matter of Locke, he substituted the intervention of the Divine agency, proving thereby to mankind that "in Him we live and move and have our being." He altogether refrained from extending his destructive criticisms to the case of spiritual substance,

though they were equally applicable to it. It was left to the still bolder speculations of Hume to question the reality of both matter and mind as substances. He has consistently and logically shown that, starting from the standpoint of experience, we can know nothing in this world, and the whole universe becomes "a riddle, an enigma, an inexplicable mystery." He carried the Lockian principles to an extreme, and landed philosophy in absolute scepticism, leaving to it nothing but isolated ideas unconnected by any real link except the blind non-rational custom. This philosophical nescience caused a strong reaction against empiricism, and roused great thinkers in the next generation to seek the root-principles of philosophy in some thing other than mere experience. Lastly, Locke's definition of knowledge "as the perception of the agreement or disagreement between our ideas," is also a prolific source of idealism and scepticism. For, as it confines knowledge within our ideas, we cannot know the real nature or essence of any thing in this world. Locke, indeed, tries to escape from such a conclusion, but the germs of ontological scepticism are to be found in his *Essay*.